GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3837
ANSWERED ON:09.08.2016
Forest Cover
Singh Shri Hukum

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the forest cover in India is only 12 percent against the requirement of 33 percent of the total land mass and if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;
(b) whether it is a fact that from April 2014 to March 2016, the Government has diverted 34,620 hectares of forest land for industrial purpose and final clearances are expected for another 40,000 plus hectares and if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor; and
(c) whether the Government is aware that the economy cannot be expanded at the cost of ecology and if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE)

(a) Forest Survey of India, Dehradun is carrying out the assessment of forest cover of the country biennially and the findings are published in India State of Forest Report. The latest report in the series is India State of Forest Report 2015. As per this report, the total forest cover of the country is 7, 01,673 square kilometers which is 21.34% of the total geographical area of the country. The detailed list showing forest cover and change in forest cover States/UTs wise is given in Annexure I.

(b) The Ministry Environment, Forest and Climate change has accorded final approval for diversion of 29189 hectares forest land during the period from 1st April, 2014 to 31st March, 2016. The details are given in Annexure-II. The final clearance for 54476 hectares forest land is under various stages of clearance which is expected to be cleared subject to satisfactory compliance of conditions stipulated in Stage-I. The details are given in Annexure III.

(c) The focus of various programmes is development without destruction. There are number of legal instrument to protect & manage the natural resources. These include Indian Forest Act, 1927, Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, National Forest Policy-1988, Biological Diversity Act-2002. There are also a number of schemes and programmes under which financial assistance is provided to State Governments for afforestation and protection of existing forests.

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